



Beginning January 1, 2012, a new law takes effect that requires all retail establishments in Montgomery County, Maryland to charge 5 cents for paper or plastic bags provided to a customer to carry goods out of stores. (There are some exceptions for prescription drugs, items bought in bulk, etc.) The new law is intended to encourage customers to bring their own reusable bags when they shop as an easy and environmentally friendly alternative to disposable bags.

As a cashier, you have an important role in helping your business comply with this new law. You can help improve our environment and reduce litter, and you can help your customers by spreading the word:

**“BRING YOUR REUSABLE BAG WHEN YOU SHOP.  
YOU’LL FIGHT LITTER AND KEEP THE CHANGE.”**

### **TIPS FOR CASHIERS**

- Make sure the BRING YOUR BAG point of sale signs the County is providing are prominently displayed on your cash register.
- Ask your customers before you begin their transaction if they have their own bag.
- If a customer brings his/her own bag, mention that they saved 5 cents.
- If a customer needs a bag, explain that they will be charged 5 cents per bag and suggest that next time, they consider bringing their own bags to keep the change. They can bring any kind of bag(s) they may have...even if they are paper or plastic bags they have at home. They will not be charged for those they bring into the store.
- For customers who want more information on the new Bag Law, they can visit the County's website: <http://www.montgomerycountymd.gov/bag> or Twitter site: @BringYourBagMC.
- If a customer asks why the bag law is necessary, you can share the information below:
  - Disposable plastic bags clog our creeks, streams and rivers and are the single largest source of waterway litter.
  - In Montgomery County alone, \$3 million of taxpayer's money is spent each year on waterway cleanup.
  - This new law seeks to change that by charging a small fee of 5 cents to discourage disposable bag use and encourage reusable bags instead.
  - Remind them that they can save the 5 cent fee just by bringing their own bag(s).

## IDEAS FOR RESPONDING TO CUSTOMERS:

- Do you need a bag?
- Plastic bags create a litter problem in our local communities, playgrounds, and streets and negatively impact property values.
- Stores are doing their part to help the environment and our quality of life by implementing the County's Bag Law.
- Stores are leading the way to help customers avoid disposable plastic and paper bags.
- The Bag Law is a litter-control effort and helps to improve our community.
- Bringing reusable bags for shopping is an easy way to reduce litter at the source and avoid the bag charge.
- The Bag Tax goes into a Water Quality Protection Fund dedicated to cleaning up our streets, streams, and rivers.
- **All** retailers charge 5 cents for paper and plastic bags under this Law.
- Many people feel it is important to do the right thing to help their communities, and this is a small measure that will have a big impact.
- Plastic bags are the most commonly found item in the litter in County waterways and rivers. Every year, the County spends \$3 million on litter reduction and clean-up.
- Plastic bags clog up the County's stormwater inlets and pipes, so when it rains, plastic bag litter contributes to flooding problems.